

Housing for a Brake Booster

[0001] This invention relates to a unitary sealed housing for a brake booster created by joining a first shell to a second shell.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] U.S. Patents 3,083,698 and 3,158,930 disclose brake boosters
5 having a housing manufactured through a well known method wherein an end surface on a first shell is crimped by cutting or shearing tabs that engage a surface on a second shell to define a unitary structure. It is a common practice to spray paint the exterior surface of the shells to protect against oxidation of the shells that are exposed to the environment when installed in
10 a vehicle. The crimped joints function in an adequate manner to seal the interior of the unitary structure for use as a housing for a brake booster. Unfortunately, the painting process while effective often did not provided a uniform protection over the entire exterior surface of a shell and as a result some oxidation could occur after a period of time. In an effort to better
15 protect the shells, a process known as e-coating was developed which uniformly coats the shell and this process is now an accepted standard for protection with respect to oxidation. However, in the crimping process through which the first shell is joined to the second shell certain portions of the first shell are either sheared or stretched such that the sheared portion of
20 the first shell has bare metal exposed to the environment and over a period of time this bare metal oxidizes and creates an undesirable appearance for the brake booster. While it would be possible to re-coat or touch up the bare or exposed metal after crimping, the time, effort and labor involved would add considerable cost to the manufacturing process which a customer would be
25 hesitant to absorb as no tangible functional benefit of the brake booster would occur from such added effort.

[0003] U.S. Patent 6,390,567 discloses structure and a method of manufacturing a brake booster wherein essentially all surfaces are protected from exposure to the environment. In this brake booster a first shell a flange
30 having a plurality of slits and slots thereon is deforming mid point of the slots to engage a peripheral surface on a second shell and create a sealed

housing. This sealed connection in a stable and non-corrosive condition however under certain conditions, corrosion may occur on the peripheral surface on the second shell as certain portions are exposed to the environment.

5

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0004] A primary object of the present invention is to provide a housing for a brake booster where after a crimping or deformation process of a flange through which a first shell is joined to a second shell to define a sealed unitary structure, the entire peripheral surface on an opened end of the second shell is covered by the flange on the first shell.

10

[0005] According to this invention, a housing for a brake booster is manufactured by deforming a first peripheral surface on a coated first shell toward an axial center of a coated second shell. The deformed first peripheral surface axially compresses a bead on a diaphragm located between the first and second shells to seal an interior of the housing from the surrounding environment. The first shell is characterized by a cylindrical body with a closed end and an opened end with the first peripheral surface located on a flange that extends from the opened end toward a shoulder. The flange has a plurality of axial slots that extend from the opened end and engage a corresponding plurality of radial slots to create "J L" shaped openings and define a plurality of arcuate projections adjacent a corresponding plurality of radial tabs in the flange. The opened end of the second shell and a bead on a diaphragm are urged toward the shoulder by a first force and a second force is applied to deform the arcuate projections toward the axis of the second shell such that a peripheral surface on the opened end of the second shell is located under the flange adjacent the plurality of radial slots to create a compressive force on the bead and join the first shell with the second shell. The axial deformation is limited to the arcuate projections and as a result the flange retains a circular shape and the peripheral surface of the opened end of the second shell is not exposed to the environment. At the same time an arcuate projection is deformed, the radial tabs are also deformed inwardly to define a secondary engagement

15

20

25

30

surface to prevent the peripheral surface on the opened end from moving away from the shoulder should the arcuate deformation be inadequate to hold the second shell against the shoulder to prevent a seal leak.

[0006] An advantage of this invention resides in a method of joining a first shell to a second shell without the exposure of any un-coated surfaces that could oxidize over a period of time in an oxygen rich environment.

A still further advantage of this invention resides in a unitary structure wherein a first shell has a flange with a plurality of arcuate projections that engage a peripheral surface on a second shell to define a first holding joint and a plurality of tabs that extend from the flange to define a secondary or back up stop to retain an opened end on a second shell in a fixed relationship with a shoulder on the first shell to create a sealed housing.

[0007] Another advantage this invention resides in a capability of visually inspection a joint created between a first shell and a second shell to assure that a sealed relationship is achieved wherein a peripheral surface on an opened end of a second shell is entirely covered by a flange on the first shell.

[0008] A still further advantage of the present invention resides in a method of manufacturing a housing for a brake booster wherein deformation of a flange occurs without exposing bare metal to the environment.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0009] Figure 1 is a metallic blank from which a first shell for a brake booster is made according to the principals of the present invention;

[0010] Figure 2 is a schematic illustration of the first shell formed from the blank of Figure 1;

[0011] Figure 3 is a schematic illustration showing a relationship between the first shell of Figure 2 and a second shell during the assembly of a brake booster;

[0012] Figure 4 is an illustration showing a portion of the first and second shells after deformation of the flange;

[0013] Figure 5 is an enlarged view of a section of the first and second shell of Figure 4; and

[0014] Figure 6 is a sectional view taken along line 6-6 of Figure 5.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0015] Figure 1 illustrates an essentially circular blank 12 which is formed from a roll stock and later formed into a first shell 10 as illustrated in
5 Figure 2. The circular blank 12 is initially stamped to create a plurality of axial slots 36,36',...36ⁿ that axially extend from the peripheral surface 13 and engage a plurality of radial slots 38,38',...38ⁿ to create an "J L" shaped openings adjacent the peripheral surface 13.

[0016] The circular blank 12 is stamped and rolled to define a first shell
10 10 with a cylindrical body 14 having a closed end 16 and an opened end 18. The closed end 16 has an axial opening 22 for receiving a valve and a plurality of openings for receiving studs 24,24' to mount a resulting booster 100 on a wall of vehicle. A shoulder 20 is located adjacent the opened end 18 with that portion of the cylindrical body 14 between shoulder 20 and the
15 opened end 18 of shell 10 defining a flange 26. The cross section of flange 26, as best shown in Figure 6, has a groove 23 for receiving a bead 27 of a diaphragm 28 and an opened end 202 on a second shell 30. The first shell 10 on being joined to the second shell 30 creates a unitary structure with sealed chambers 32 and 34 to create a resulting brake booster 100.

[0017] The particular details of flange 26 are best illustrated in Figures
20 2,4,5 and 6. After the circular blank 12 is stamped or rolled to define a flange 26, as illustrated in Figure 2, with the "J L" shaped openings to define a first plurality of arcuate projections 40,40',...40ⁿ that are separated from a second plurality of arcuate projections 42,42',...42ⁿ. A corresponding base 39 for
25 each of the second plurality of radial slots 38,38',...38ⁿ is located adjacent radial plane 11, shown by dashed lines in Figure 4 that extends from the axis of the resulting first shell 10. The second plurality of arcuate projections 42,42',...42ⁿ each have a first 44 and a second 46 radial tab thereon with corresponding edges 43 and 45 that are separated from the base 39 a fixed
30 distance "X".

[0018] The resulting first shell 10 is coated with an elastomeric material that inhibits the oxidation of the surface of the shell 10. After shell 10 has

been coated, it is ready for assembly with a second shell 30 through a crimping process as illustrated in Figure 3. In order to perform the crimping process, bead 27 is located in groove 23 adjacent shoulder 20 and a force is applied to bring shell 30 toward shell 10 such that an edge 206 on peripheral surface 204 of the opened end 202 of shell 30 is brought into alignment with radial plane 11. Thereafter a force is applied to the arcuate surface of the first plurality of arcuate projections 40,40',...40ⁿ by ram 500 such arcuate surface 41 engages edge 206 and holds opened end 202 in a fixed position with respect to shoulder 20 to form a unitary structure with the interior sealed from the surrounding environment, as shown in Figures 4, 5 and 6. The deformation of the first plurality of arcuate projections 40,40',...40ⁿ with respect to the cylindrical surface of the flange 26 is between 14-20 degrees and as a result the coating has sufficient elasticity that cracks are not created along the point of engagement 41' on the top or 41 on the bottom 41 of the arcuate projections 40,40',...40ⁿ of shell 10 and the peripheral surface 204 of shell 30 nor is the peripheral surface 204 of the opened end 202 of shell 30 exposed to the surrounding environment as it is entirely covered by flange 26.

[0019] At the same time the first plurality of arcuate projections 40,40',...40ⁿ are being deformed, the die associated with ram 500 also acts on tabs 44 and 46 to radially bend the tabs toward the axial center of shell 10. The angle of the bend is between 40 and 45 degrees with respect to a tangent for the cylindrical flange 26 but because of the gap defined by the fixed distance X, edges 43 and 45 do not at this time engage anything but do provide an indication of the formation of the seal formed by the joint. The length of each of the plurality of the first plurality of arcuate projections 40,40',...40ⁿ is such that the deformation that takes place does not appreciably effect the eccentricity of the cylindrical body 14 and as a result the opened end 18 adjacent flange 26 retains a circular shape.

Method of Assembly

[0020] The manufacture of a brake booster 100 having a housing with a first shell 10 joined to a second shell 30 in accordance with the principals of the present invention can be achieved through the following steps in an assembly process.

[0021] A first shell 10 is selected from a supply source. The first shell 10 having been stamped and an its entire external surface coated with an oxidization protecting coating. The first shell 10 is characterized by a cylindrical body 14 with a closed end 16 and an opened end 18. A shoulder 20 is located adjacent the opened end 18 to define a flange 26. The flange 26 has a first plurality of axial slots 36,36',...36ⁿ that axially extend from the opened end 18 toward the shoulder 20 and engage a second plurality of radial slots 38,38',...38ⁿ to create an "J L" shaped openings adjacent a radial plane 11 with respect to the axis of the shell 10. The "J L" shaped openings define a first plurality of arcuate projections 40,40',...40ⁿ that are separated from a second plurality of arcuate projections 42,42',...42ⁿ such that the first plurality of arcuate projections 40,40',...40ⁿ are perpendicular with a base 39 of the second plurality of arcuate projections 42,42',...42ⁿ. Each of the second plurality of arcuate projections 42,42',...42ⁿ have a first 44 and a second 46 radial tab that are separated from the base 39 by a fixed distance X defined by the width of the second plurality of radial slots 38,38',...38ⁿ.

[0022] A second shell 30 is selected from a supply. The second shell 30 having been stamped to define a cylindrical body 200 with an opened end 202 and a closed end 206. The cylindrical body 200 has a peripheral surface 204 adjacent the opened end 202 that is located in a radial plane to the axis of the second shell 30. After the second shell 30 is stamped, its entire external surface coated with an oxidation protection coating.

[0023] The first shell 10 is located in a fixture of a type illustrated in Figure 3 with valve components and movable wall of a brake booster already assembled therein and a bead 27 of a diaphragm 28 located in groove 23 on

flange 26 adjacent shoulder 20 to define a chamber 32 within the first shell 10.

[0024] Thereafter, the second shell 30 is placed on top of the first shell 10 such that opened end 202 engages bead 27 and is received into flange 26, as shown in Figure 6.

[0025] A first force F^1 is applied to the second shell 30 which moves the second shell 30 toward the first shell 10 to compress bead 27 between opened end 202 and shoulder 20. This force compresses bead 27 until edge 206 the peripheral surface 204 is located adjacent radial plane 11, as illustrated in Figures 5 and 6.

[0026] A second force F^2 provided by a single hydraulic ram 500 is radially applied by a die to bend the first plurality of arcuate projections 40,40',...40ⁿ toward the axial center of the second shell 30 bring surface 41 thereon into engagement with edge 206 on the second peripheral surface 204 such that chambers 32 and 34 are sealed from the surrounding environment and the first shell 10 is fixed to the second shell 30, as illustrated in Figure 4,5 and 6. The engagement of surface 41 on the bottom of the first plurality of arcuate projections 40,40',...40ⁿ with edge 206 on the second peripheral surface 204 is along the entire arcuate length of each arcuate project 40.

[0027] At the same time the die moved by the second force F^2 , also acts on tabs 44 and 46 of the second plurality of arcuate projections 42,42',...42ⁿ to radially bent the tabs 44 and 46 toward the axis of shell 30 but because of the gap X, tabs 44 and 46 do not touch anything but are bent in such a manner that should the engagement of the surface 41 and edge 206 later deflect, surfaces 43 and 45 would engage edge 216 to limit the movement of opened end 202 away from shoulder 20.

[0028] Once ram 500 has completed bending the first plurality of arcuate projections 40,40',...40ⁿ toward the axis of shell 30 the resulting sealed joint can be achieved by a visual observance of the existence of gap "X". If more definitive evidence is necessary a tool could be inserted in gap X

to confirm the relative positions of the edge 216 with respect to the radial plane 11 to confirm that peripheral surface 204 is covered by flange 26.

[0029] In order to test the strength of the joint formed by bending the first plurality of arcuate projections 40, 40', ... 40ⁿ into engagement with edge 206 of the second peripheral surface 204 on the second shell 30 the shell 10 and 30 were pulled apart. it was determined that an angle of 14-20 degrees provided an initial holding force of between 3820 to 4350 pounds. In a situation where the second shell 30 was actually pulled away from the shoulder 20 with a force greater than 4350 pounds, the tabs 44, 46 engaged the second peripheral surface 216 to prevent bead 27 from separating from the groove 23 and a leak occur across the resulting joint.